

son that the people of the latter State because of their free school system knew their duty, while the people of Maryland were so ignorant and benighted that they needed light and instruction on this point. Now, for one, Mr. President, I have no sympathy with gentlemen whether from Cecil, from the mountains of Allegany, or from Baltimore city, who can come into this Hall and give utterance to sentiments so disparaging to the honor and pride of either their native or adopted State. If the gentleman from Cecil claims Maryland as his mother, then I say to him this was the "unkindest cut of all." If he be of that class who has sought and found a home within her borders, the very fact of his presence here to-day proves that her people have extended to him the hand of hospitality and welcome and made him what he is. Take either horn of the dilemma he chooses and the sentiments avowed by him wake no responsive echo in my breast.

Without attempting a refutation of the absurd theory that slavery militates against the education of the white population of a country, I would take leave just here to recall to the attention of the Convention a statement read in debate by my friend from Washington (Mr. Negley) wherein it was shown that by far the larger portion of the Presidents, Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, Attorney Generals, foreign ministers, consuls, &c., had come from the slaveholding South. I regret I do not see the gentleman in his seat to-day, for I should like with his permission to have read as a part of my argument the statement prepared by him, believing as I do that it would furnish a very instructive commentary on this branch of my subject. Now, when it is remembered that the South is numerically so much smaller than the North, and that she has filled with her own sons in a large majority of cases the highest and most responsible offices under the Government of the United States, offices requiring the highest talents and learning that the whole country could command, we may be permitted to conclude that the South is not that benighted region which abolition fanatics would have us believe; and that learning, education and refinement have sought and found a home in that land where the dark shadow of slavery rests.

Gentlemen upon the other side of the House, not content with arraigning slavery as inimical to the material and educational interests of a people, have endeavored to show that it engenders vice and fosters immorality and crime. This charge, like others heretofore adverted to, is equally unfounded in truth, and is not supported by any evidence whatever. The system of slavery, instead of being favorable to the growth of vice, would seem by its wholesome restraints to act as an effectual check upon the indulgence of the baser passions of mankind. By an eminent divine

who has studied this question, the opinion has been expressed that there are more offences against Christian morality committed in the single city of New York than can be found amongst the slave population of all the Southern States together. How morality and virtue under the new regime of freedom have flourished in the city of Washington and on the coast of North Carolina, I leave for gentlemen to answer who have seen fit to bring this question into discussion.

I have no desire to pursue the investigation further, and will content myself with leaving the question where the census of 1860 has placed it. On page 10 of the census the writer, after giving the facts and figures, uses this language: "Comparing the Northern division of the country with the Southern, a greater proportion of mulattoes is found in the free States."

Having now, Mr. President, disposed of some of the leading objections that have been urged against the system of negro slavery, let us look for a moment at the character of the proposition before the House. Here in our midst there exists a species of property for the original introduction of which we of this day and generation are in no wise responsible. We have seen that its existence is recognized by the supreme law of the land, the Federal Constitution. That through every period of the history of Maryland it has been fostered and cherished as an institution alike redounding to the interest of the master and the slave. The proposition now is to undo the work of centuries. To destroy that which we were but yesterday engaged in building up; to tear from the protection of kind and humane masters those who were contented and happy, and turn them out upon the cold charities of an unfeeling and heartless world; to rob the people of Maryland of property in which they had thousands and millions of dollars invested, and all this without the shadow of excuse or justification and without attempting to make any reparation for the wrong and injury thus unnecessarily inflicted. No words that I can employ can characterize in fitting terms the action proposed by the majority of this House. Certainly the annals of no civilized community can furnish an example of such reckless disregard of the rights of individuals.

The distinguished individual who during the three past eventful years has occupied the highest office within the gift of the American people, to whom all eyes have been turned with earnest interest, and whom a portion of his countrymen propose to honor for four years longer, in his message to the Thirty-seventh Congress uses these significant and emphatic words:

"The liberation of slaves is the destruction of property, property acquired by descent or purchase, the same as any other property."